

**DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING OF CULWORTH PARISH COUNCIL
held on Thursday 10th March 2025 at 7pm in the Village Hall**

Present: Stuart Rolt (SR) Chairman
Martin Rowling (MR) Councillor
Catherine Ruffley (CR) Councillor
David Mumford (DM) Councillor

(4 present) Gary Denby (GD) Parish Clerk

Public: None.

Welcome to members by SR. Apologies were given for the late postponement of the meeting, caused by the unexpected absences of Councillors.

1. Apologies received:-
Cllr Andrew Wilby (AR) (absent on holiday)
Cllr Jose Rowling (JR) (knee surgery)
2. Councillor declarations of interest & dispensations in the following agenda items: None
3. Receive minutes of the meeting held on **13th January 2025** as an accurate record of the Parish Council official acts and decisions. Proposed by DM, seconded by CR and agreed by all Councillors present.
4. **Public Concerns** (prior notice to the the Chair or the Parish Clerk is recommended)
None.
5. **Matters Arising** from previous Parish Council minutes
 - 5.1 Ref 5.1: Clerk's letter to Tree Tops requesting an update to their previous reporting
Carried forward **GD**
 - 5.2 Ref 5.3: Update on the installation of a native species hedgerow on 8th March
MR reported that this has started, only behind the pavilion so far, himself working alone.
Councillors agreed to not plant against Mr Read's new fence (Gingerbread Cottage)
bordering the Play Park (email received).
 - 5.3 Ref 5.4: Update of the Standing Orders to include a revised Complaints procedure
Carried forward **GD**
 - 5.4 Ref 5.5: Update on Scribe ordering. This has been ordered in advance of the new
financial year, to permit some familiarisation beforehand. Awaiting details. **GD**
 - 5.5 Ref 5.6: Display for the final External Audit report from PKF-Littlejon (30 Dec)
External audit certificate and report now available for upload to the Parish Council web
site, with a Notice of Public Rights displayed for the period 6 March to 17 April 2025.
 - 5.6 Ref 5.8: 'No Dogs in the playground area' sign:- ordered, awaiting delivery **GD**.
Paul Lewis has kindly installed a self-closing gate on the Play Park entrance. However,
there are still two vandalised palings missing. Invoice to follow? Clerk to thank **GD**.
 - 5.7 Ref 8: Update on WNC Devolution plans (as you were, for now). Councillors updated.

- 5.8 Ref 9.15: Report from AW regarding CHFT and Village Hall progress (monies returned) in his absence, AW kindly forwarded a summary:-

I can report that CHFT is now making good progress with the Cricket Pavilion cum Village Hall facility. The project is being costed and when I return I have a meeting with HS2 to identify what funding and other support may be available. Likewise the church project is moving forward but is likely to be on a more extended timetable.

Considerations were given to a possible Christmas Fete being held in the church during the first week of December? Include contacts with local Arts persons? Support needed?

Considerations were given to a possible village 'Fun Day'. There is also the more serious War memorial weekend in May. Therefore a June date may be more appropriate, how about the afternoon of sat 21st June? Have cash prizes for the best village scarecrows? We need a working BBQ. Have it on The Green, where more visible? Support needed - £500 to be made available from the 2025-26 contingency proposed by SR, seconded by MR and agreed by all Councillors present.

6. Progress Report on Street Light audit, in preparation for new electricity contract **AF GD**

From the payments recorded below, it can be seen that YU Energy have doubled the monthly electricity bill, since now out of contract and they do not wish to continue with unmetered supplies. Over 5-6 March the Clerk has performed a physical audit of all the 26 village street lights, trying to identify them by number, type and location, taking photographs of the in situ and recording them all within the Parish online mapping system:-



These can be automatically listed with additional descriptions and valuations (see below).

What the Clerk is lacking is a formal energy consumption figure for the new LED lamps, in order to generate the new consumption certificate (how, there seems to be several parties), in order to obtain quotations for new electricity provision (Tomato Energy is recommended, with zero standing charges currently). Our current electrical contractor may have supplied these to AF, but none has been forwarded to the Clerk to date. The Clerk keeps asking for them...

Name / Description	Description Of Location	Bulb Type	Date Purchased	Replacement Value (GBP)	Last Valuation Date
No01	Outside 3 Barley Hill.	35W SOX	2021-01-01 00:00:00		
No02	Adjcent to Barley hill sign, near to No 8	24W PLL			
No03	Outside 16 Barley Hill	20W LED	2023-01-01 00:00:00		
No04	Corner of Barley Hill and Queen Street	35W SOX			
No05	Corer of Walnut Close and Queen Street	24W PLP			
No06	Outside 4 Butts Close	20W LED	2024-01-01 00:00:00		
No07	Outside the Rectory, Queen Street	20W LED	2025-03-05 00:00:00	200	2025-03-05 00:00:00
No08	Outside Parish Church, Queen Street	20W LED	2025-03-05 00:00:00	200	2025-03-05 00:00:00
No09	Ivy Cottage, Banbury Lane	35W SOX			
No10	Near The War Memorial, The Green	24W PLL			
No11	On house Daisy Cottage, High Street	24W PLL			
No12	Outside Fairway Cottage, High Street	24W PLL			
No13	Outside Mountfield, High Street	35W SOX			
No14	Outside Cornation Terrace, High Street	24W PLL			
No15	Gatehouse Farm, High Street	35W SOX			
No16	Eydon End, High Street	35W SOX			
No17	Crown Houses, High Street	24W PLL			
No18	Near Ivy Cottage, Barley Hill	24W PLL			
No19	Ivy House, High Street	35W SOX			
No20	Gingerbread Cottage, Banbury Road	35W SOX			
No21	Fulford Cottage, The Green	35W SOX			
No22	Opposite school, off Queen Street	24W PLL			
No23	Village Hall, Queen Street	35W SOX			
No24	On Puzzle Cottage, Queen Street	35W SOX			
No25	Walnut Close	20W LED			
No26	Near bus shelter, Sulgrave Road	35W SOX			

7. Report back on village litter pick on 1st March

MR reported that a dozen volunteers got together and covered most areas of the village. WNC kindly picked up the bags of litter on the following Monday, after Charles Buckley had collected them all together, including four tyres. JR collected and returned the grabber equipment, which this year included rings to support the sacks whilst in use. Once annually is considered to be sufficient.

8. Standing as Candidates for the Parish Council Elections on 1st May 2025 (Candidate application forms submitted **by 4pm on 2nd April**, BY APPOINTMENT)

See www.northantscalc.gov.uk/elections for details in advance

Also www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance-candidates-parish-council-elections-england/nominations/completing-your-nomination-papers/nomination-form

The Clerk provided some hard copies of the Nomination forms for Councillors to complete. Councillors Stuart Rolt, Martin Rowling and David Mumford reported that they will not be standing again for the next four years. Appreciation was shown for their many years of service to the village.

The Parish Council remains quorate and can function with only three elected Councillors, requiring co-option to fill the vacancies over the following couple of meetings. However, loss of the above signatories on the Parish Council bank account may present some immediate difficulties in May. **TBA**

9. Correspondence received by Councillors

- 9.1 15 Jan: N-CALC Training Newsletter – Jan 2025 training programme link
- 9.2 15 Jan: N-CALC mini eUpdate 10/01 – Remembering COVID

- 9.3 29 Jan: N-CALC mini eUpdate 17/01 – Local Elections 2025
- 9.4 30 Jan: WNC relaunch of Parish Path Wardens scheme
- 9.5 30 Jan: WNC significant progress since peer challenge review
- 9.6 30 Jan: PFCC newsletter from Danielle Stone
- 9.7 30 Jan: WNC works to deliver new heritage park in Northampton
- 9.8 30 Jan: WNC invite to attend focus session on 'The One West Northants Plan'
- 9.9 30 Jan: WNC have your say on dangerous driving
- 9.10 30 Jan: N-CALC Training Newsletter – the Code of Conduct in Practice
- 9.11 30 Jan: WNC mural project commemorates Northampton's historic castle
- 9.12 30 Jan: N-CALC mini eUpdate 24/01 – Elections Countdown
- 9.13 30 Jan: WNC planning portal weekly news – looking to sell land?
- 9.14 30 Jan: Campaign for the safety of lithium ion batteries

- 9.15 5 Feb: WNC last call for 'One West Northants' session
- 9.17 7 Feb: WNC 'One West Northants' summary from Clerk and N-CALC. Response?

- 9.18 10 Feb: WNC invite to Civic Dinner 4th April by chair Jo Gilford
- 9.19 10 Feb: N-CALC mini eUpdate 07/02 – it's 'As You Were' on devolution
- 9.20 10 Feb: WNC Northampton town boost with St James Depot regeneration
- 9.21 10 Feb: WNC presents a balanced budget for 2025-26
- 9.22 10 Feb: WNC Kier annual parish satisfaction surveyed
- 9.23 10 Feb: WNC residents with greatest housing need continue to be prioritised!
- 9.24 10 Feb: ONS newsletter Jan 2025: population projection, private rent and house prices
- 9.25 11 Feb: MP update on drive-thru dog bin near Swan Farm

- 9.27 24 Feb: WNC new youth Parliament – young being people sought
- 9.28 24 Feb: WNC presents a balanced budget for 2025-26
- 9.29 24 Feb: PFCC newsletter from Danielle Stone – Feb 2025
- 9.30 24 Feb: WNC explores future of Racecourse Pavilion
- 9.31 24 Feb: WNC get ready for the elections this May
- 9.32 24 Feb: WNC update on Local Nature Recovery strategy
- 9.33 24 Feb: N-CALC reminder of Northants Climate & Nature Action survey (by 3 March)
- 9.34 24 Feb: WNC Local Plan Briefing 3 April – registration
- 9.35 24 Feb: Keep Britain Tidy – how are you supporting the Great British Spring Clean?
- 9.36 24 Feb: N-CALC mini eUpdate – Calling all Clerks
- 9.37 24 Feb: WNC cabinet green light for St James Depot regeneration for Northampton

- 9.38 3 Mar: Bad news on the Street Lighting bill for Feb 2025 (out of contract)
- 9.39 3 Mar: WNC Daventry residents feedback removes Eastern Way housing proposals
- 9.40 3 Mar: WNC sustainable technology sees more road repairs across WNC
- 9.41 3 Mar: N-CALC mini eUpdate 28/02 – Election Update
- 9.42 3 Mar: N-CALC Q&A for times and places for submitting Nomination Forms

- 9.43 6 Mar: Clerk's physical Street Light audit – map and attributes within Parish Online
- 9.44 8 Mar: Clerk arrangements to deliver Nominations in bulk, in person on Wed 26th March

10. Planning (items available at wnc.planning-register.co.uk + Advanced Planning + Parish)

- 10.1 2024/5470/TCA: Reduction to 2x mature apple trees, light prune to 1x cherry tree, fell 1x holly tree and 1x cherry tree at Warden House, The Green. OX17 2BB.
No Objections 13 Jan.
- 10.2 2024/5391/TCA: Crown raise and reduction to 1x sycamore tree at 3 Walnut Close OX17 2BJ. For info. No Objections 9 Jan.

- 10.3 2024/2800/OUT: Extension to existing barn to form living accommodation for pub owners and / or staff at The Red Lion, High Street OX17 2BD by 1 July. Councillors supported this application. Pending.
- 10.4 2024/2589/FULL: New agricultural barn, new track and access to land adjacent to Peas Furlong, Sulgrave Road by 14 June. Councillors Objected to this application on grounds of its dangerous access on the brow of a hill within a National Speed Limit (60 mph) area. Pending.

11. Audit and Accounts

- 11.1 Ref 11.1: Public consultation on the External Auditor's report for 2023-24. Active.
- 11.2 Ref 11.3: Response from Contractor with regards Play Park mowing in 2025: Willing.
- 11.3 Ref 11.5: Update on two street light replacements – awaited, with a request for the old units to be retained and the full specification paperwork of the new units to be forwarded to the Clerk **GD**.
- 11.4 Ref 11.6: Update on Hugo Fox renewal of the Parish Council site – carried forward **GD**.
- 11.5 Consider and approve the Parish Council payments listed below, proposed by DM and agreed by all Councillors present. Note the refund of the unused village hall Phase One CHFT monies under direction, to enable immediate structural repairs. The regular payment of the Wave Water bill was also included last-minute:-

Description / Power	Amount	VAT	Total
PKF Littlejon charge for external audit 2-23-24 ref NH00067 (retro) <i>Local Govern't Act 1972, Section 111 Subsidiary powers, discharge of functions</i>	£420.00	£84.00	£504.00
Complete Weed Control selective herbicide spraying around the village in May 2025, per previous years (planned for May 2025) Quotation requiring prior acceptance. <i>Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10</i>	£122.00 £400.00	104.40	£626.40
Cllr Martin Rowling expenses for Ruck Keene card (Forge Coffee) for 103 rd birthday.	£12.95	-	£12.95
Texprep 80-off Newsletters Feb/mar 2025 Inv 27303 <i>Local Government Act 1972, Section 142 local Government info</i>	£33.90	-	£33.90
Marcus Young Environmental Services Ltd. 7X Dog Waste Bins weekly emptying 01/04/24 to 31/03/2025 <i>Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10</i>	£1,383.20	£276.64	£1,659.84
Gary Denby Parish Clerk gross remuneration and expenses (9 weeks) including home office expenses 13 Jan – 7 Mar 2025 <i>Local Government Act 1972 Appointment of Staff s.112</i>	£452.76 £50.05	-	£502.81
Seton sign: No Dogs in the Playground area 297x 210 mm (Clerk) <i>Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10</i>	£19.05	£3.81	£22.86
Yu Energy Street lighting electricity charges 01 – 31 Jan 2025 (DD) 43.5 p/day standing; 27.08 day 27.08 night p/kWh (Inv 02079218) <i>Highways Act 1980, lighting functions s.98</i>	£141.58 £18.26	£7.08 £0.87	£166.92
Yu Energy Street lighting electricity charges 01 – 28 Feb 2025 (DD) 360 p/day standing; 47.5 p/kWh (Inv 023873591). Final Invoice <i>Highways Act 1980, lighting functions s.98</i>	£260.98 £74.82	£13.05 £3.74	£352.59
Village Hall refund of their share of unused Phase One CHFT funds (retrospective, on behalf of Culworth Hill Field Trust): 3 Mar 25.	£8,928.00	-	£8,928.00
Wave water bill for 6 months 16 Nov 24 to 3 Mar 25 <i>Provide recreation grounds and manage them: Public Health Act 1875</i>	£18.51	-	£18.51

12. Items for the next Parish Council agenda

- 12.1 CR reported on some holes besides a little-used footpath, where the soil had be used to create some bike jumps. Whilst quite ingenious of the youths, the holes could present a hazard to unaware walkers. Whilst a possible responsibility of the WNC Rights of Way Officer, it might be more effective to approach the land owner directly?
 - 12.2 Appreciation was given to AF in his absence, for kindly moving the speed sign to the other end of the village. The highest speed to date going downhill past the houses is 47 mph.
 - 12.3 Email from Chris on Butts Close with regards overhanging branches from the cricket field
13. Date of next meeting: **Thursday 3rd April, 9pm** in the village hall, prepare for audit after the annual Parish Meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.10 pm

.....
Chairman

.....
Date